Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of ~~providing secure information~~ generating an encryption key, the method comprising the steps of:

hashing a hash vector based upon an encryption key by scanning indexed bytes of the encryption key and using indices and associated values of indices of the encryption key as indices of two bytes in a hash vector to be swapped; and

regenerating a new encryption key with ~~an~~ the encryption key, encrypted data, and a the hash vector based upon ~~an~~ the encryption key.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of regenerating a new encryption key with an encryption key, encrypted data, and a hash vector based upon an encryption key comprises performing byte addition of ~~an~~ the encryption key, encrypted data, and ~~a~~ the hash vector based upon ~~an~~ the encryption key.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Canceled)

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of regenerating a new encryption key with an encryption key, encrypted data, and a hash vector based upon ~~an~~ the encryption key comprises: selecting a previously encrypted data record; and regenerating a new encryption key with an the encryption key, selected encrypted data, and a the hash vector based upon ~~an~~ the encryption key.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5 wherein the step of selecting a previously encrypted data record comprises: randomly selecting an index from ~~the~~ a predetermined range ~~[1, t-1]~~ using a byte of ~~an~~ the encryption key as a seed of random generation; and selecting the previously encrypted data record corresponding to the selected index.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of regenerating a new encryption key with an encryption key, encrypted data, and a hash vector based upon ~~an~~ the encryption key comprises regenerating a new encryption key with ~~an~~ the encryption key, previously encrypted data, a the hash vector based upon ~~an~~ the encryption key, and a received cipher record.

8. (Currently Amended) A method of ~~providing secure information~~ generating an encryption key, the method comprising the steps of:

generating n encryption keys;

encrypting n tracks of data records with n tracks of parallel encryption operation;

hashing a hash vector based upon the encryption key by scanning indexed bytes of the encryption key and using indices and associated values of indices of the encryption key as indices of two bytes in a hash vector to be swapped; and

regenerating an encryption key with ~~an~~ the encryption key, a the hash vector based upon ~~an~~ the encryption key, and selected encrypted data.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein the step of regenerating an encryption key with ~~an~~ the encryption key, a hash vector based upon ~~an~~ the encryption key, and selected encrypted data comprises: randomly selecting an index from ~~the~~ a predetermined range ~~[1, t-1]~~ using a byte of ~~an~~ the encryption key as a seed of random generation; and selecting the previously encrypted data record corresponding to the selected index.

10. (Currently Amended) A method of ~~providing secure information~~ generating an encryption key, the method comprising the steps of:

hashing a hash vector based upon an encryption key by scanning indexed bytes of the encryption key and using indices and associated values of indices of the encryption key as indices of two bytes in a hash vector to be swapped;

encrypting a data record with a the hash vector based upon ~~an~~ the encryption key; and

regenerating ~~an~~ the encryption key with ~~an~~ the encryption key and encrypted data.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 10 wherein the step of encrypting a data record with a hash vector based upon an encryption key comprises performing a logic operation on a data record and a the hash vector based upon ~~an~~ the encryption key.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11 wherein the step of performing a logic operation on a data record and a hash vector based upon an encryption key comprises performing an XOR operation on a data record and a hash vector based upon ~~an~~ the encryption key.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 10 further comprising the step of decrypting encrypted data, comprising performing a logic operation on an encrypted data record and a the hash vector based upon ~~an~~ the encryption key.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 13 wherein the step of performing a logic operation on an encrypted data record and a hash vector based upon an encryption key comprises performing an XOR operation on an encrypted data record and a the hash vector based upon ~~an~~ the encryption key.

15. (Currently Amended) A system for ~~providing secure information~~ generating an encryption key, the system comprising:

a source node;

a destination node;

a data stream created at said source node;

means for encrypting data of said data stream with a hash vector based upon an encryption key;

means for hashing the hash vector based upon the encryption key by scanning indexed bytes of the encryption key and using indices and associated values of indices of the encryption key as indices of two bytes in a hash vector to be swapped; and

means for regenerating a new encryption key with ~~an~~ the encryption key, encrypted data, and a the hash vector based upon ~~an~~ the encryption key.

16. (Withdrawn) A method of authenticating one system node to another system node, the method comprising the steps of: generating an authentication key at a node; transmitting the authentication key to another node; and starting a daemon at each node for regenerating a new authentication key with an authentication key, an auxiliary key, and a hash vector based upon an authentication key, and maintaining a corresponding number-regeneration-counter at each node.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 16 wherein the step of regenerating a new authentication key with an authentication key, an auxiliary key, and a hash vector based upon an authentication key comprises performing byte addition of an authentication key, an auxiliary key, and a hash vector based upon an authentication key.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 16 further comprising the step of generating an auxiliary key from at least one key selected from the group consisting of

encryption keys, authentication keys, and a hash vector based upon an authentication key.

19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18 wherein the step of generating an auxiliary key comprises generating an auxiliary key by performing byte addition of an authentication key, an encryption key, and a hash vector based upon an authentication key.

20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18 wherein the step of generating an auxiliary key comprises generating an auxiliary key by performing byte addition of two or more authentication keys and a hash vector based upon an authentication key.

21. (Withdrawn) A method of validating data integrity, the method comprising the steps of: buffering an encryption key and a hash vector based upon an encryption key at a source node; encrypting a data record using a hash vector based upon an encryption key to yield a cipher record of a first point in time at a source node; transmitting the encrypted data record to a destination node; receiving a cipher from a destination node; decrypting the received cipher from the destination node with a hash vector based upon an encryption key of a second point in time; and comparing the decrypted received cipher to a data record.

22. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 21 further comprising the steps of: buffering an encryption key and a hash vector based upon an encryption key at a destination node; encrypting a data record using a hash vector based upon an encryption key to yield a cipher record of a second point in time at a destination node; transmitting the encrypted data record to a source node; receiving a cipher from a source node; decrypting the received cipher from the source node with a hash vector based upon an encryption key of a first point in time; and comparing the decrypted received cipher to a data record.

23. (Withdrawn) A method of synchronizing one node to another node, the method comprising the steps of: receiving a request from a first user to communicate with a second user along with an authentication key number regeneration count and a hashed value of an authentication key number regeneration count; requesting an authentication key number regeneration count and a hashed value of an authentication key number regeneration count from a second user; comparing a central authority authentication key number regeneration count to a user authentication key number regeneration count; and aligning the authentication keys of a user and a central authority node according to the comparison.

24. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 23 wherein the step of receiving a request from a first user to communicate with a second user along with an authentication key number regeneration count and a hashed value of an authentication key number regeneration count comprises receiving a request from a first user to communicate with a second user along with an authentication key number regeneration count and a hashed value of an authentication key number regeneration count encrypted with a static key.

25. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 23 wherein the step of requesting an authentication key number regeneration count and a hashed value of an authentication key number regeneration count from a second user comprises requesting an authentication key number regeneration count and a hashed value of an authentication key number regeneration count encrypted with a static key from a second user.

26. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 23 further comprising the step of authenticating the identity of the first and second user.

27. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 26 wherein the step of authenticating the identity of the first and second user comprises: generating a nonce at a central authority node; encrypting a nonce with a hash vector of an authentication key;

transmitting an encrypted nonce to a user node; decrypting an encrypted nonce at a user node; and comparing a decrypted nonce with a nonce.

28. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 27 wherein the step of encrypting a nonce with a hash vector of an authentication key comprises: generating additional authentication keys; and encrypting a nonce with a hash vector of an additional authentication key.

29. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 27 further comprising the steps of: generating additional authentication keys; transmitting a nonce encrypted with a hash vector of an additional authentication key to a central authority; decrypting an encrypted nonce at a central authority; and comparing a decrypted nonce with a nonce at a central authority.